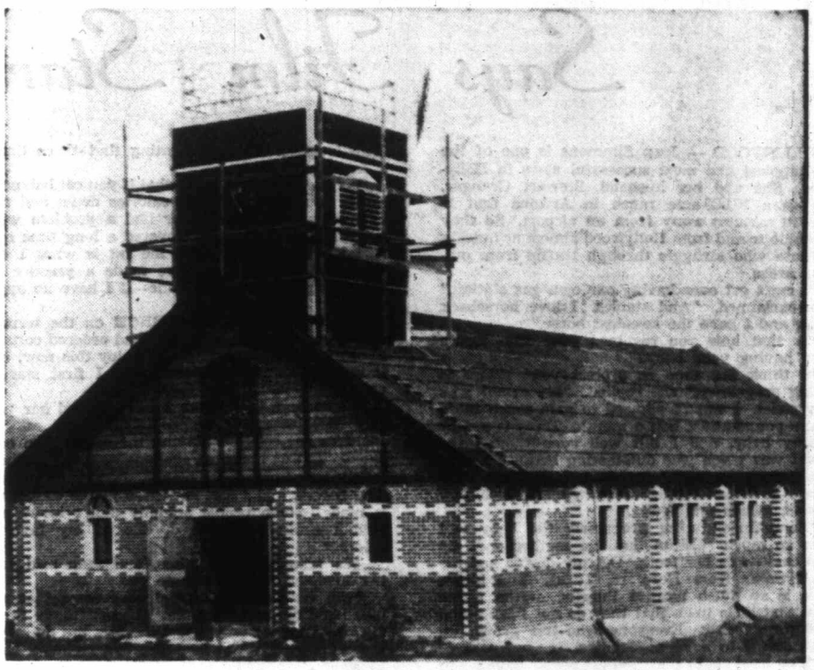
The Charming Church is a Gesture of Devotion

By CHARLES THOMPSON

GLORY to GOD



Duncan's new Christ's Church needs help to completion.

A **RETIRED STORE-KEEPER** at Duncan who says he has had Divine protection all his life, is seeing materialization of a life-long dream—a church of his own.

He has labored on it himself for more than two years and spent nearly every cent of his savings as well as a large legacy.

But to see it finished he has had to ask for donations to complete the replica of Christchurch Priory, at Hampshire, England, his home town.

"I built it as a thanksgiving to God, and as my duty to man," said the builder and designer, George E. Turner, Norcross Road.

"I hope those who worship here get the peace of mind I got from building it," he said.

Mr. Turner says he cannot remember when he first conceived the idea to build the church, but he knows he always planned to "build it well and strong."

"This one will last 1,000 years," he commented.

"They don't build churches like this here." He indicated the Saxon brick and stone architecture, including a clock with 22-carat gold leaf hands and figures in the centre of a tower topped with eight small spires.

To make sure it lasts, he imported eight Italian bricklayers for the Belgian stone work with red and off-white bricks that form small crosses on most of the out surfaces.

"They used a European formula for the mortar. It sets like iron, three times as tough as the American, and will last three times as long."

"It'll take 100 years for the mortar to cure. Then the whole thing will be like one piece of stone," he said.

He points with special pride at the foundation which took "300 tons of sand, gravel, cement and steel" and many months of back-breaking toil by himself and workers he hired for laying the foundations after he built the forms.

What will it be named? What denomination?

The beautiful building on a small hill 200 yards east of the Trans-Canada Highway, two miles north of Duncan, will probably be called "Christ's Church."

He said the congregation will gather for non-denominational services "along the lines of evangelism, for all to come."

"I hope though, that it will bring people into contact with God. As for me, I believe I always have had Divine protection," Mr. Turner said.

Many times he was narrowly saved from death. One incident that engraved itself on his mind happened after the First World War in Clearwater Valley, on the eastern slopes of the Rockies, near Banff.

He and his partner on a federal government survey crew were going down a 10,000-foot mountains after building a five-foot cairn of rocks to prove it had been climbed; and had taken eight pictures, as they were required to do, to show a panorama of the view.

To gain time and relieve the monotony, he jumped on a sheet of ice that extended out of sight down one of the steep slopes.

"I got going so fast I got the wind up. I couldn't see because the wind was cutting into my eyes and I had to close them," he explained.

In desperation and sheer terror he threw himself on his back. "I didn't know what I was doing, why I did it, or any idea that it would help me at all."

An Alpine climbing stick he was carrying bit deeply into the ice and cut a deep trough, slowing his descent until it finally stopped him ". . . just in front of a cliff. I was within inches of death. I don't know how deep the cliff was, but I couldn't see the bottom."

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HE STARTED to build the church in 1957 and "could have had it finished in months, but I wanted everything to be just right. I didn't want a slap-up job."

"It was expensive, so I did as much work as I could myself, and only hired workers when it was impossible for me to do the job," he explained.

Just inside the church he has placed a sign asking for donations to help purchase roofing materials, heating equipment, light fixtures and electrical wiring.

Beside the sign is a picture of the original church.

"There are two strange things connected with the building of that church," he said, indicating the small picture.

One night, just before work for the day ended, it was found that one of the large, main roof timbers was not long enough. It was left on the ground, but next morning it was in place . . . and long enough.

Construction during those days took many years, and yet one of the workmen did not collect his pay.

"Another coincidence has to do with the money my aunt left me," he said. "I never spoke of religion to her, never in my life. The money I got went into the church here. The rest of her fortune was left to the Church of England."

Mr. Turner said he has not wasted a cent, but in fact has saved money on the design of the 40x80-foot building.

roof supported by "scissor-like" beams anchored

He points with pride at the heavy, 40-foot-wide to iron rods and shoes set in the seven supporting wall pillars. The purlins are six-by-eight-inch timbers; the rafters four-by-fours. Two-inch thick tongue-and-groove planks were used for roof decking. All are fantastically strong for the job they have to do.

He claims it is the best-built church on the Island.

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AT PRESENT the inside of the building is bare, without pews or altar.

Above the entrance hallway is the "mechanical room" where Mr. Turner toiled for months assembling the clock and bells mechanism after a month of intense study.

"Doesn't it look simple?" he asked, pointing to the brass wheels, cogs, weights and bars making the clock. "It isn't, though."

Getting the clock and bell mechanism to operate was the hardest job he had to do, he said.

Filling the room is the "keyboard" for the bells, the clock's basic mechanism as well as a 60-pound pendulum and 500-pound weight dangling in the tower.

The huge weight is the "spring" for the clock and the clock's chimes.

From the clavecin (keyboard) ropes go up through the roof to the eight bells that produce that familiar sound in England and some Canadian towns . . . calling the people to worship.

Fondly but humbly Mr. Turner touched the keyboard and played a few bars from a hymn. He explained that because the cost of more bells was prohibitive, only simple tunes could be played.

"The workmanship in the clock and bell mechanism is wonderful," he said. "Over there (in England) they take pride in their work. I have a pile of correspondence from them, most of it instructions and general information that must have taken someone hours to prepare . . . and they didn't have to."

Both companies showed a great interest in the project, and in doing so prevented him from making several mistakes. They wanted to know the length of the driveshaft between the clock's face and the mechanism so it was long enough to go through the tower's side; and by asking for the inside dimensions of the tower they made sure it could accommodate the bells.

With pride he showed how he had followed instructions, and so the bell's peal would not be dulled, he had snubbed the beams and struts by driving nails in the floor beside the supports but allowing enough room so the bar could still vibrate for tone.

There is a fondness for the project in every word he speaks. It shows, too, in the curved, gravelled driveway that makes a half-circle to the entrance of the church, and in the ornate gates at each end.

It shows in the small house he lives in, the cheap tobacco from which he rolls his smokes and the unpretentious small car he drives.

"I am worried about getting it finished, although I have never been sorry I started it," he said.

"I've run out of money. At least $5,000 is needed to complete the job."

And so he is asking for donations to be sent to the manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce at Duncan for deposit in the church's trust fund.

Mr. Turner said by giving money toward the building people are not helping him "but helping God and His work."

THIS WEEK'S ANAGRAM

How is your vocabulary? There is no better or more fascinating way to improve it than by solving these anagrams each week. Add the letters in the first column to the letters in the second column, and rearrange the letters so as to form a new word. EXAMPLE: FEND plus SEE equals? Answer: DEFENSE. Can you solve the following anagrams?

(1)	ALTO	PLUS	ERR	EQUALS	???
(2)	LAMB	"	REG	"	"
(3)	LICE	"	OLD	"	"
(4)	MINE	"	COB	"	"
(5)	OPEN	"	FAR	"	"

Solution to today's ANAGRAM on Page 6.